

2006 AGSD(UK) CONFERENCE **GENERAL SPEAKER**

Tim Emmott from MEDIC ALERT

MedicAlert was founded in 1956 in the USA and the idea was brought to the UK in the 1960's. It now has a membership of over 4 million from 40 different countries. It's a non-profit making, registered charity providing a life-saving identification service via a body-worn bracelet or necklet with a 24 hour emergency number. It is aimed for individuals with hidden medical conditions or allergies.

How Can Medic Alert Help?

It is a simple concept, the MedicAlert emblem provides vital medical information such as identity of patient, next of kin details, specialist and physician details, and current medication details. It offers international access, 365 days a year from over 100 countries. MedicAlert supports healthcare professionals and ensures rapid and accurate diagnosis in an emergency. An example of an emblem is shown below, and as you can see, engraved on the reverse of the emblem is the international symbol for medicine, vital medical information, the telephone number of MedicAlert's emergency response centre and the member's ID number.



Who Needs Medic Alert?

- Anyone with a hidden medical condition (e.g. diabetes, epilepsy) or allergies (e.g. to medication or even nuts or wasp stings)
- People with pacemakers or implants
- Those taking regular medication
- Anyone who has a rare blood group
- People who want to register as an organ donor, who want to register details of a Living Will or next of kin contact details

Membership Profile

Around a fifth of MedicAlert's membership suffer from diabetes, allergies or have heart problems, for example a pacemaker or implant. Around 30% of the Membership is aged 19 or under. And another 30% is aged 60 or over.

MedicAlert's Endorsers and Supporters

A crucial aspect of MedicAlert's work is to undertake an annual education campaign to ensure healthcare and emergency professionals are up to speed with medical identification and the MedicAlert service, and work closely with key healthcare organisations. MedicAlert is endorsed by British Association for A&E Medicine, Royal College of General Practitioners, St. John Ambulance, British Society for Haematology, Foundation of Nursing Studies, St. Andrew's Ambulance. MedicAlert also works closely with healthcare charities and patient groups at national and local level.

MedicAlert Emblems

MedicAlert offer a wide range of stylish and award winning emblems. In July 2006 MedicAlert was voted Best Jewellery & Clothing by Allergy Magazine's 55,000 readers. There are around 70 different designs, offering something for everyone; sportsbands for kids, dog tags for fashion conscious teenagers or a classic range of gold and silver jewellery. Each emblem is engraved with the member's personal medical information. A few examples of emblems available are shown below.



Becoming a Member

To become a Member there is a £20 joining fee, plus the cost of the emblem (from £19.95). There is a subscription cost thereafter of £20 per year which runs the emergency response service, (receiving around 2,500 calls a year or which approximately 200 represent serious emergencies). Members are contacted to update their records twice a year. MedicAlert's vision is to provide the service to everyone who might benefit, therefore subsidised or free membership is available to people on limited income or receiving benefit. MedicAlert's membership accounts team can advise on eligibility.

Benefits of Membership

Effective treatment in an emergency, peace of mind, protection and independence for the member, and peace of mind for friends and family. Above all, MedicAlert provides those with hidden medial conditions or allergies the reassurance that they will be protected in an emergency.

For more information call 0800 581 420 or visit www.medicalert.org.uk